

REMARKS

Claims 2, 3, 5, and 6 are all of the pending claims. By this amendment, claims 1, 4, 7, and 8 have been canceled.

Claims 2 and 5 have been rewritten independent form.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner has objected to dependent claims 2, 5, 7, and 8 but has indicated that these claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the recitations of the independent claim and any intervening claims.

In response, Applicant has rewritten dependent claims 2 and 5 in independent form.¹

Applicant respectfully submits that dependent claims 3 and 6 are patentable at least because of their dependency from claims 2 and 5, respectively.

Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

¹ Applicant notes that an exact re-writing of claims 2 and 5 in independent form would include the recitation "so as to uniformly increase temperatures of respective step shaft portions of the shaft member." However, because original dependent claims 2 and 5 already recite "so as to uniformly increase temperatures of the step shaft portions of the shaft member," the addition of the former recitation is not necessary in view of the fact that the later recitation is already provided.

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.116
Application No.: 10/553,802

Attorney Docket No.: Q90885

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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